



CRANKING



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June-2019

The Wessex Stationary Engine Club's Monthly Newsletter

Editor's Note

I am pleased to announce that we have a newsletter editor. I am sure that she will introduce herself in the next issue, so in the meantime please send anything for inclusion to editor@wessexsec.org or by post to the Secretary, Wessex Stationary Engine Club. 26 Cranmore View, Frome. BA11 4DT

Ted

"Gutenberg To Gates"

Eric, the Chairman, opened the meeting with a few announcements and then introduced the speaker for the evening - Mr Roy Ackrill. There were 17 members present and we were all treated to a very interesting talk, complete with items about the early printing to present day.

Printing was a very major industry from way back. The Bible was one of the main items to change from decade to decade. Symbols and Roman letters were used at the beginning, changing all through the years until the letters are as we know them today.

One main man was Gutenberg, who used natural oils, moving on from clay and gum. He was born in roughly 1394/1404 and died 1468. He attended grammar school and was responsible for the first printed bible, of which there are only 48 surviving today.

Lots of items were passed around the room; printing letters, paperwork with different prints and newspapers for us all to look at. Magnifying glass or glasses were definitely needed. A small printing press was on show too

William Caxton, who died in 1491, was the first English printer. William Tyndale, who spoke 8 languages, translated and printed the first Tyndale bible. The Bible played a big part in the English language. The type-setting point progressed from 1 sheet at a time to the present day with hundreds of copies. The printing industry used many types of presses.

In 1712 there was a newspaper tax of 1d. Roy brought an old Bristol Journal from 1785 to compare printing and language. In 1955 Bill Gates modernised things again by introducing microsoft. As the years go on the internet is taking over most communications these days with the use of Facebook and emails, which have now made the art of letter writing a dying thing. The talk was so interesting and Roy went for 15 mins longer than he should have. Lots of interest and questions followed, with 3 ex-printers being in the audience

Eric then thanked Roy for one of the best talks we have had. The raffle then took place and everyone left having had a really good evening

Roger Pike

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT JUNE 2019

June did not start well and it did not get better as the month progressed. The first bad news was that the dear lady that had joined the rally committee to help me with the administration side of the event let me know that due to moving away from the area to Wareham she will be unable to give me the help I was hoping for. Anyone want to come on board and give help with the administration side of the event I would welcome with open arms.

The next shock was the resignation of our newsletter editor Sacha. Being a very busy person she did a splendid job stepping into the job and taking it on. A few early hiccups but on a whole Sacha did an excellent job as far as I was concerned.

But not all was lost as with a great deal of luck a new editor has been found and I am sure that the details will appear in another part of this newsletter.

They say things happen in threes, well as you know by now it did, with a weather forecast for horrendous weather during the third week of June it was with a very heavy heart that the decision had to be made, do we carry on or do we cancel? Well looking at the forecast on the internet Tony told me that it looked bad. Tuesday saw rain in this area, it was supposed to rain on Wednesday but that didn't happen. Thursday was a different story, heavy rain from early morning until very late evening, and we also had showers on Saturday and Sunday, though they were light this would certainly have kept away the public, and our income from the event could have been little to none. The decision had already been made to cancel, and everyone that I contacted due to the cancellation agreed that it was the right thing to do. We don't end up making a huge loss of club funds that the rally committee has worked so hard to raise over the years, so we live to fight another day.

The last two evenings at the Old Down Inn have been with two very interesting speakers, one being how we got to the moon - I never knew that the rocket had a weight of over 4,000 tons, 2,400 tons being fuel, consumed at thirteen gallons per second. Our second speaker giving us the history of printing from ancient times to the present day. We will soon be looking for speakers for 2020. Any ideas please let any committee member know.

Well that's all for now. I am going to load an engine to take to the Durrington show on Sunday. I hope the sun shines

Eric Gay

The Year So Far

The AGM will bring to an end my first full year as Hon Sec of the Wessex Stationary Engine Club Ltd. and still very few of you will know who I am, so having the newsletter to play with I thought I would (belatedly) introduce myself and share a few thoughts.

In common with many of our members I am the wrong side of seventy, but unlike most of you I am very new to the hobby, having spent the last forty or so years involved in motorcycle sport as, variously, a competitor, mechanic, technical official, sponsor and marshal, and I thought it was time to do something else. As a one-time plant fitter I always had a soft spot for stationary engines but never had the time to go to shows etc. being away most weekends at race meetings, so a change was needed.

Once I had decided to free up my weekends I then needed an engine, and one followed another until I had more than the available storage would allow, so the buying had to stop. I joined the WSEC as it seemed the most local, and the one with which I would have most in common, but I had no intention of taking a more active part until I was dragooned by Eric into filling the Hon Sec's role.

We have had more than our share of upheavals over the last couple of years. My first sad duty as Hon Sec was to accept Karen's resignation as Treasurer, newsletter editor and distributor and so much more, and of course I was only Hon Sec because Jackie was finding herself unable to give it her full attention. Luckily Caroline has taken on the Treasurer's role so for the moment the executive committee is back to full strength, and the newsletter editor's post is about to be filled by a willing volunteer! After seven years Wendy has decided to give somebody else a chance of becoming Membership Secretary, and Tony has agreed to cover it pro tem, but a volunteer to take it on permanently would be very welcome.

That leaves the final (I hope) change. At the last AGM Eric stated his intention of standing down, so we will be looking for a new Chairman. I think we would all agree that his enthusiasm and hard work have kept the club going in the face of a certain degree of apathy and complacency, and he will be a hard act to follow. We have a good committee and a dedicated team organising crank-ups and the Midsummer Show, and I'm sure there is one among you who has the vision and drive to use these resources to take the club on to greater things. At all of our events a team of ladies organise and run the raffles, write reports and generally help to make them as enjoyable as possible while raising funds for our chosen charities. Perhaps one of them would like to stand!

One of the biggest changes to take place during my tenure is the adoption of on-line enrolments and the greater use of the website and Facebook. Although the number of on-line enrolments isn't great I think it will grow, particularly as it becomes more difficult to deal with banks and cheques. Almost half of our newsletters are now going out by email, which is a great help to all concerned and an enormous saving in stamps and envelopes, and I thank those who have agreed to take them this way. I would also like to show my appreciation to those who were running the Facebook page before I took over for establishing a solid base for me to work on. I now know how much work is involved! I have now passed it on to our new editor, who is already doing a great job.

Finally I must mention the work Eric puts in to make sure we have an entertaining club night every month. After an unfortunate communication breakdown leading to the non-appearance of our first speaker we have had some really good talks, so thank you Eric and thanks also to the loyal band who turn up to every meeting, I don't think they've been disappointed, and I would urge everyone to give it a try.

I have just heard the sad news that Ralph Champion has passed away. My condolences to his family and friends.

Ted Edwards

Club Events

Sunday 28 th July	Crank up & Vintage Day, The Somerset Arms, Maiden Bradley, Somerset, Nr Frome. E/Forms & Details 01225 754374
Monday 29 th July	C/N Mr Barry Williamson. A Bristol soldier of the Great War
Monday 19 th August	C/N Terry Williams (Light Infantry) talking about the Poppy of Honour WWI, (arranged by Steve Pride)
Monday 30 th September	C/N Mr Terry Merrit Smith, Ration Books to Rock and Roll.
Saturday 5 th October	Cranmore Vintage Sale, A361, Frome to Shepton Mallet Road, 01225 754374, 9am onwards.
Monday 28 th October	C/N Model Evening I/C Steam, Boats, Meccano, Etc. Anything you like, Prize for best model or display.
Monday 25 th November	C/N The Wessex Quiz Night

WESTFIELD FETE RADSTOCK Sunday 2nd May

Jackie and I haven't been to a fete for donkeys years so we made our way to Westfield Recreational Ground to join up with our old friends Hazel and Gerald who were already on site with their trailer mounted organ, We weren't really sure what went on here but there was a familiarity to the usual venues we attend. Like our Rallies a lot of work and preparation had gone into setting up this field with stalls all around the perimeter, mainly charity ones and the field's centre area infilled with a ring, Lots of blow up play things for children to bounce around on and a line of vintage cars on show which included two Land Rovers exhibited by Charlie Moore who in the past was a good supporter of our rallies with his fine collection of horticulture machinery, one of Charlie's vehicles was a very high Ex WD forward control Land Rover, quite rare I would think, the other one was a series one, very collectable, and he told me he even takes it to rallies In Holland, "on a trailer?" I asked, "no, by road and Ferry!" he replied. Besides Hazel and Gerald's organ more music was on site with a brass band and a group of drummers playing some fantastic Afro Caribbean rhythms, who would change their beat on a whistle signal from their leader. The highlight of the day was to be a fly Past by the Red Arrows but as we all know it was mostly a wet damp day and owing to a low cloud base the fly past was cancelled, but at the organised time Gerald heard them fly around Radstock somewhere way up high, no doubt on their way to another venue that had clear skies. We had a very nice day here and listening to the vast collection Of Organ music brought an air of traditionalism and nostalgia to the event and I found myself even doing the movements to the Birdie Song tune.

The Three Oakfords Annual Rally

Shillingstone Sat & Sunday 18th & 19th May

This has to be one of our favourite events situated in two fields under huge rolling Dorset hillsides. Once again as the stationary engines were in a separate field to the main event all meticulously set out by engine steward Simon (with a little help from his friends). With almost 100 engines in the programme almost a dozen were from our club with a nice cross section of exhibits including precision made Redwing models, A nice 1060 Crossley, a small Stuart 800 which sadly developed a small end knock and was best shut down on Sunday and a tiny hot air fountain pumping engine that in its working life would have been hidden behind a display of ferns and greenery in the lobby of an up market hotel foyer. Our club Chairman Eric was besides exhibiting busy going round no doubt drumming up support for our own club rally in June. Ace stationary engine snapper Jamie was busy going around with his camera and I believe he also covered the Castle Coombe Rally which date clashed with this event. Saturday was a great day here with lots of visiting public showing great interest in the S.E lines, but Sunday was a different matter as the clouds built up and around lunch time down it came as predicted by the weather forecasters. This sent the visitors fleeing for cover and with no sign of let up around 2pm many started to pack up, such a shame but a familiar happening over which we have no control.

Robin.

All information given will be as accurate as can be, for any errors or omissions I apologise in advance. Please note that opinions may or may not represent club policy.

Last date for submission in the June Newsletter is Friday 21st June 2019